

VERSION OF CLAIMS SHOWING AMENDMENTS

31. (Amended) A recombinant expression vector comprising a promoter operably linked to an expressed polynucleotide which encodes a polypeptide and hybridizes under highly stringent conditions to a nucleic acid [which encodes a polypeptide] consisting of SEQ ID NO:1 [2 or conservatively modified SEQ ID NO:2], wherein said polypeptide mediates the proteolytic removal of an AAX tripeptide from a prenylated CAAX protein and said highly stringent conditions comprise hybridization and wash conditions selected to be 5° C lower than the thermal melting point (T_m) for said nucleic acid at a defined ionic strength and pH.
32. (Amended) A vector according to claim 31, wherein the [nucleic acid encodes SEQ ID NO:2] polypeptide comprises SEQ ID NO:2 or conservatively modified SEQ ID NO:2.
33. (Amended) A vector according to claim 31, wherein the [nucleic acid consists of SEQ ID NO:1] polypeptide comprises SEQ ID NO:2.
34. (Amended) A vector according to claim 31, wherein the [polynucleotide comprises SEQ ID NO:1] polypeptide consists of SEQ ID NO:2.
35. (Amended) A recombinant expression vector comprising a promoter operably linked to an expressed polynucleotide which encodes a polypeptide and hybridizes under highly stringent conditions to a nucleic acid [which encodes a polypeptide] consisting of SEQ ID NO:3 [4 or conservatively modified SEQ ID NO:4], wherein said polypeptide mediates the proteolytic removal of an AAX tripeptide from a prenylated CAAX protein and said highly stringent conditions comprise hybridization and wash conditions selected to be 5° C lower than the thermal melting point (T_m) for said nucleic acid at a defined ionic strength and pH.
36. (Amended) A vector according to claim 35, wherein the [nucleic acid encodes SEQ ID NO:4] polypeptide comprises SEQ ID NO:4 or conservatively modified SEQ ID NO:4.

37. (Amended) A vector according to claim 35, wherein the [nucleic acid consists of SEQ ID NO:3] polypeptide comprises SEQ ID NO:4.
38. (Amended) A vector according to claim 35, wherein the [polynucleotide comprises SEQ ID NO:3] polypeptide consists of SEQ ID NO:4.
39. (Unamended) A recombinant cell transduced with the vector of claim 31.
40. (Unamended) A recombinant cell transduced with the vector of claim 32.
41. (Unamended) A recombinant cell transduced with the vector of claim 33.
42. (Unamended) A recombinant cell transduced with the vector of claim 34.
43. (Unamended) A recombinant cell transduced with the vector of claim 35.
44. (Unamended) A recombinant cell transduced with the vector of claim 36.
45. (Unamended) A recombinant cell transduced with the vector of claim 37.
46. (Unamended) A recombinant cell transduced with the vector of claim 38.